

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the indication that the drawings are acceptable, for the acknowledgement of Applicants' claim of priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, and for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449.

Applicants also acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 7 and 8 contain allowable subject matter on page 6 of the Official Action.

Applicants also acknowledge with appreciation the Advisory Action dated December 5, 2008.

Claims 2, 5, 7 and 8 are currently pending. Applicants note that claim 7 has been amended to place it into independent form, which the Examiner has indicated as being allowable. Claims 2 and 5 have been amended to depend from claim 7. Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendments (which merely rewrite allowable claim 7 into independent form), reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

Applicants submit that entry of the present amendments are proper after Final Official Action since they merely rewrite an objected to, allowable claim into independent form.

On pages 2-4 of the Official Action, claims 1, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over FUJIMOTO et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,391,457). Applicants note that claims 1 and 4 have been cancelled, and that claim 5 has been amended to depend from allowable claim 7. Accordingly, Applicants submit that

this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is now moot, and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

On pages 4 and 5 of the Official Action, claims 2 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over FUJIMOTO et al. in view of various secondary references to KOBAYASHI (U.S. Patent No. 7,084,920) and HAMAMURA et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,700,617). Applicants note that claim 6 has been cancelled, and that claim 2 has been amended to depend from allowable claim 7. Accordingly, Applicants submit that these rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are now moot, and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendments (which merely rewrite allowable claim 7 into independent form), reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and an early indication of the allowance of all of the pending claims.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Entry of the present amendments, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate. Applicants submit that entry of the present amendments are proper after Final Official Action since they merely rewrite an objected to, allowable claim into independent form.

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Any amendments to the claims that have been made in this amendment, which do not narrow the scope of the claims, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered cosmetic in nature, and to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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